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Wiki Post #1

The Picture of Dorian Gray

Oscar Wilde

**Summary:** In the first part of Dorian Gray, we are introduced to Basil Hallward, who is an artist. He is the one who began drawing pictures of Dorian Gray, who is a very handsome, intriguing young man. When Basil Hallward receives a visit from his good friend, Lord Henry, he learns how interested Lord Henry is with Dorian Gray. Lord Henry first lays eyes on Basil’s magnificent painting. He wants Basil to show it off to the world because he admires it so much. However, Basil declines, stating that he feels as though he “put too much of himself in it.” Lord Henry is confused by this, mainly because he knows that this picture of Dorian Gray is by far one of Basil’s best works of art. Lord Henry gets to meet Dorian when he shows up to Basil’s home. He insists on meeting Dorian while Basil is a little reluctant for Lord Henry to meet him. He claims that Lord Henry is a “bad influence” on Dorian. After the two chat for a while, Lord Henry invites Dorian to go the theatre with him that evening.

Lord Henry sets out to find out about Dorian Gray. He visits his uncle later and wants to find out more about Dorian. Apparently he had a rough childhood, both of his parents are dead, and he was forced to live with someone who was not very suitable for raising a child. Lord Henry then continues on to visit his aunt, Lady Agatha. They are all joined by Dorian Gray, who continues to fascinate everyone around him. He has a sort of charm and wittiness to himself that draws people in. Lord Henry continues to be so intrigued by the young man that he goes out later with Dorian when he was supposed to have plans with Basil.

A month later, Dorian begins sharing his story of how he has fallen in love with a woman named Sibyl Vane. She is an actress that caught Dorian’s eye from the very beginning. He explains his whole story to Lord Henry, who thinks he is very naïve for falling in love so soon with another woman. Sibyl, herself, knows that she has also fallen in love with Dorian Gray. They eventually become engaged to be married. Sibyl’s mother is very skeptical of all of this, along with her brother, who is to go off to sea soon. He tells his mother to look out for Sibyl, and to be very careful of her actions. Her mother and her brother approve of this because they do not want to see her hurt. After Basil learns of Dorian’s engagement, he grows skeptical, stating that he does not want Dorian to marry someone below his standards. Lord Henry makes a note that she is a beautiful woman, and he wants to observe Dorian’s experiences with love.

**Analysis**: I thought this part of the book seemed to drag out a long time. To be honest, I am waiting for something exciting to happen. I understand that in the first part of the book we are supposed to be introduced to the characters, and I feel that I got a good sense about what all the characters are like so far; however, I want the story to have something exciting to happen. It makes me wonder if the story will take a turn, or if it will remain the way it is. Now that I have a good grasp on the background of all the main characters I want the story to pick up a little bit. I like the characters so far in the story, and I feel as though Dorian Gray fascinates me as well. I want to learn more about him because I feel like there is more to the story than what I have read so far.

**Application:** I can compare the character of Dorian Gray to modern characters today. For example, Dorian Gray is this interesting, strange, very attractive, and somewhat mysterious character. I think some of the same human characteristics apply to modern characters such as Edward Cullen from Twilight. They both share the same characteristics and that’s how I feel like it has spanned time and culture. Dorian Gray, in this case, seeks perfection, even though it is unattainable. He comes from this bad childhood but to everyone else, he appears to be perfect looking. He is in pursuit of love, for example with his attractions towards Sibyl Vane, even though the two characters come from two different worlds. We see this sort of attraction and devotion and pursuit of truth, love, and justice in their society or culture, as well as ours today.